

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 11-15 are pending in the present application. Claim 11 is an independent claim. By this response, claims 8-10 are cancelled and claims 11-14 are amended. Claim 15 is new.

Examiner Interview

Applicants' representative conducted a telephone interview with the Examiner on June 25, 2008. During the course of this interview the Examiner stated that he regarded claim 11 as containing allowable subject matter and also noted that a claim allowing for non-uniform taper of the lock pin would be regarded as allowable.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for noting that claim 11 would be allowable if re-written into independent format. Applicants have re-written claim 11 into independent form as suggested by the Examiner and respectfully request allowance of this claim and all claims depending therefrom.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 8, 10, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,962,133 to Ogawa (hereafter "Ogawa"). Claims 8 and 10 are cancelled, and claim

13 now depends from claim 11, which the Office Action indicated as allowable. This rejection is therefore moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 9, 12, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ogawa. Claim 9 is cancelled and claims 12 and 14 now depend from claim 11, which the Office Action indicated as allowable. This rejection is therefore moot.

New Claims

Applicants respectfully submit new claim 15 is allowable based on the telephone interview conducted between Applicants' representative and the Examiner.

Conclusion

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but to merely show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the outstanding rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance in the present application.

However, should the Examiner believe that any outstanding matters remain in the present application, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' representative, Naphtali Y. Matlis

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(Reg. No. 61,592) at the telephone number of the undersigned in order to discuss the application and expedite prosecution.

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Respectfully submitted,

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